

# The Evening World

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## "PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES."

**N**ICHOLAS J. HAYES, who was Fire Commissioner when the Loughman hose was bought, refuses to be the goat. Fire Commissioner Lantry and Chief Croker also refuse to accept the responsibility for the rotten hose and the lack of water pressure which made the Parker Building fire such a disaster.

After a week's repose under the ruins of the Parker Building the bodies of the three firemen have been dug out. The insurance adjusters are now at work.

To-night there may be another fire. Some child may carelessly play with matches in a crowded tenement-house block. The electric wires may be crossed in an office building with thousands of tenants. Some woman on the high floor of a hotel may overheat her curling irons.

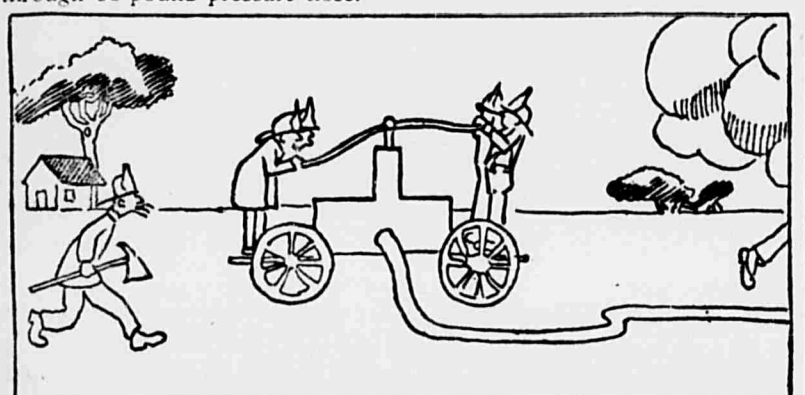
Then what will happen? The New York Fire Department and the New York firemen will be promptly on the spot. The hose carts will come. The engines will be attached to the hydrants.

With rotten hose and weak water pressure there may be another horror.

Commissioner O'Brien writes that "the existing system is to be supplemented by a special fire service due solely to the initiative of George B. McClellan." That "special fire service" is to be operated from stationery pumps and with special mains, with a pressure as high as 400 pounds.

If 460 lengths of fire department hose burst at a pressure of from 60 to 300 pounds, as the underwriters' report shows on page 2, how many lengths of hose would be left at 400 pounds pressure?

What good is it to spend \$5,000,000 for a high pressure fire service if the hose bursts? An old hand engine is the safest way to pump water through 60-pound pressure hose.



Who is responsible for the rotten hose?

Nicholas J. Hayes, who was Fire Commissioner in 1905, says, in the Tribune, that he was opposed to buying the Loughman hose, and "so strongly did I feel in the matter" that he wrote to the Board of Estimate protesting. He says:

"I knew that this company did not itself manufacture hose. I considered that it was not for the best interests of the city, particularly in the peculiar circumstances, and I had no hesitation in saying so at the time."

What were "the peculiar circumstances?"

Possibly Mayor McClellan knows. He was chairman of the Board of Estimate at the time Commissioner Hayes says he protested against this contract to Loughman. Possibly John H. O'Brien knows. He was secretary to the Mayor at that time, and he has since appointed Loughman his deputy in the Water Department.

There are several "peculiar circumstances" in connection with this Loughman hose.

One of them is why when 116 lengths of Loughman hose burst Loughman was not required to replace the burst hose with good hose as the contract called for. Another contractor whose hose burst was required by Fire Commissioner O'Brien in 1906 to replace it.

Other matters in connection with the city's affairs are attended with "peculiar circumstances." Many of these are intangible and indefinite. The rotten hose and the low water pressure are not.

Mayor McClellan has an accountant tabulating the hose records of the Fire Department. The Board of Underwriters have already printed this in eighteen tables telling about the brands, age and number of burst lengths of hose.

What the Mayor should investigate is "the peculiar circumstances" to which former Fire Commissioner Hayes refers.

## Letters from the People.

Who Should Be Punished?

To the Editor of The Evening World:  
 It has been suggested that parents should be punished for their children's misdeeds in school, as they are supposed to be responsible for the offspring. I would like to know who is responsible for the teachers' failings, say for instance in the case of a night school teacher who once struck a boy in the face. If the head of the family is responsible for his children, I suppose the head of the Board of Education, or the superintendents, who is the head of the schools, is responsible for the teachers and ought to be punished accordingly. What say you, readers?  
 M. I.

Leap Year.

To the Editor of The Evening World:  
 The reasons why each fourth year is called leap year are as follows: For three years the calendar falls into arrears, one-quarter of a day every year, so that these accumulate three quarters behind or three hind quarters. On the fourth year the calendar makes it up by jumping "forequarters" (four quarters),

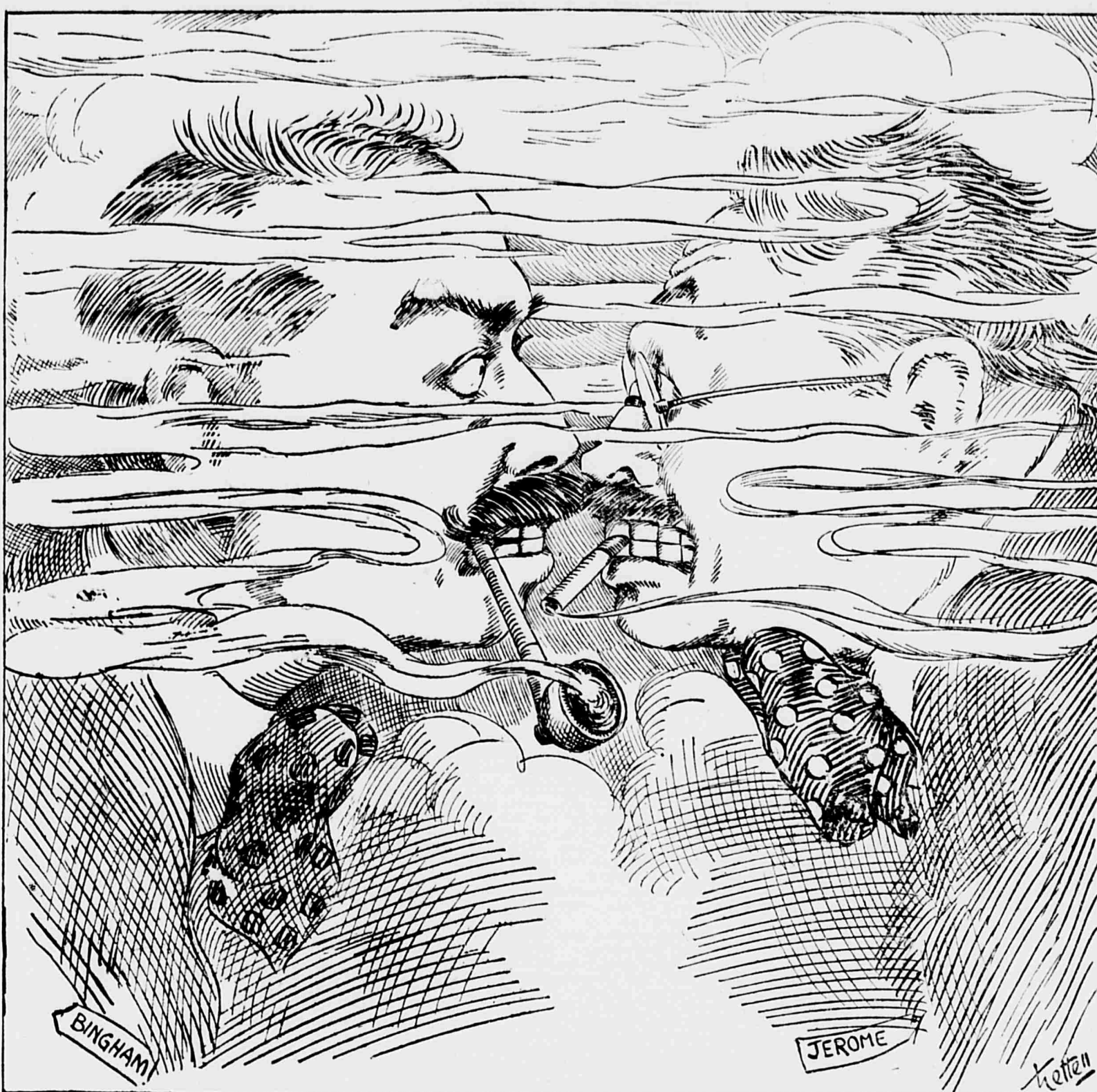
arrears for three years, and the fourth year the ladies make up the deficit by leaping at unwary bachelors. But the ladies are not as considerate as the calendar. They grant no "quarter." Hence it is said that the ladies, during that fourth year, engross all privileges; and the initials of those words, with the eccentric calendar and the ladies' opportunity give the name Ladies, Etc. (gracefully Admired Privileges).  
 "He Is Best Who Does Best."  
 To the Editor of The Evening World:  
 What is the English for the following Latin proverb: "Optimus est qui optima facit?"  
 FRANK SULLIVAN.

Two Problems.

To the Editor of The Evening World:  
 Let readers solve the following problems: "The specific gravity of hydrogen referred to air is 0.07, and the weight of one liter of air is 1.29 grams. What is the weight of one liter of hydrogen?" and "A cylindrical granite shaft is 2 meters in diameter and 10 meters high. If the specific gravity of the stone is 2.5, what is the weight of the shaft?"  
 L. F.

## The Pipe Calls the Cigarette Punk.

By Maurice Ketten.



## The Story of the Operas

By Albert Payson Terhune.

NO. 18—WAGNER'S "SIEGFRIED."

**S**IEGFRIED was the forerunner hero by whose help Wotan, king of the gods, hoped to avert the curse of the Nibelung gnomo, Alberich. As told in the stories of "Rheingold" and "The Valkyrie," Wotan had snatched from Alberich the Rhine Daughters' magic ring, which made its owner master of the world. Alberich, in revenge, had laid a death curse on the Ring. Wotan had been forced to give it to the giant Fafnir, along with the other Nibelung treasure and the Tarnhelm (wishing cap). Fafnir, changing himself to a dragon, hid the treasure in a forest cave and watched it night and day. Alberich still hoped to regain the Ring. So did the gnomo's brother, Mime. Wotan knew if they should recover it they would not only rule the world but would wreck Valhalla, the abode of the gods. . . .

Mime, dwelling in the same forest as Fafnir, had found a dying woman, Sieglinda, who had entrusted to his care her infant son Siegfried, together with the splintered pieces of a wonderful sword. Mime carefully reared Siegfried to manhood, hoping the boy might one day overcome Fafnir and win for the gnomo the Ring, Tarnhelm and hoard. The youngster waxed strong and beautiful. He was ignorant of his parentage and instinctively hated Mime. At length he forced the crafty gnomo to tell him the story of his birth and of the sword. Then he made Mime forge the broken weapon for him. Mime could not. Wotan, appearing to the gnomo, told him not only that Fafnir would be slain by Siegfried, but that the latter, because he was fearless, was the only man who could remake the ruined sword. Siegfried set to work at the task with a will and achieved it. Then, guided by Mime, he started, weapon in hand, for Fafnir's den. . . .

Reaching the dragon's lair, Siegfried sounded a call on his horn. Out rushed Fafnir. Siegfried attacked the transformed giant, and after a mad battle slew him. Then, entering the cave, he viewed the priceless treasure. But it aroused no wonder in his simple mind. Born and brought up in the forest, he knew nothing of wealth or power. Still, as trophies of his battle, he carried forth the Tarnhelm and the Ring. As he was ignorant of the latter's value and magic its curse could not harm him. In slaying Fafnir a drop of the dragon's blood had fallen on Siegfried's hand, burning him. He had put his hand to his mouth to ease the pain. The dragon's blood, touching his lips, had given him the ability to read the language of birds. Thus, as he emerged from the cave, he heard and understood the song of a woodbird, which warned him that Mime would presently approach and try to poison Siegfried in order to gain the Ring. Scarce had the song ended when Mime shuffled sulkily up to him with a flask, offering the hero a cooling drink. The youth, with a sweep of his sword, laid the wily Nibelung dead at his feet. Once more the curse had brought death.

Siegfried was now alone in the world. All his life he had been lonely, always seeking vainly for a friend, a comrade. Mime was the only human face he had ever seen. He was lonelier than before since Mime was slain. He welcomed even the return of the woodbird that had warned him against the Nibelung. The bird now told him of a fire-giant rock where slumbered Brunhilde, the glorious Valkyrie, who had been made mortal and cast into that enchanted sleep because of disobedience to her father's, Wotan's, commands. Fearfully Siegfried set forth to find this fiery rock. Wotan, who wished to recover the Ring and to withhold Siegfried from discovering Brunhilde, barred his way. But with a stroke of his sword Siegfried cut the god's sacred spear in twain and pressed on. This spear was the symbol of Wotan's divine power. Now that a mere mortal had shattered it Wotan realized with horror that the reign of the gods was drawing to an end.

Siegfried hastened toward the rock and plunged bravely through its protecting wall of fire. The flames did not daunt him, for beyond lay Love. And because he was fearless the flames could not harm him. On the summit of the rock he found Brunhilde asleep—the first woman he had beheld in all his life. Wonderingly, ecstatically he knelt beside her and kissed her on the lips. The spell was broken and the goddess-woman awoke. She sprang up to find the hero standing adoringly before her.

Their eyes met. Brunhilde in that gaze forgot Valhalla and her life as a Valkyrie, forgot Wotan and her lost immortality, forgot all except that Siegfried's arms were stretched out to her.

The story of "Gotterdammerung" (fourth of Wagner's quartet of "Ring" operas) will appear Tuesday.

## The Chorus Girl Tells of Dopey McKnight's Friend, Boston Charley.

By Roy L. McCordell.



"**W**ISH guys wouldn't talk shop!" said the Chorus Girl wearily. "That's just the trouble having friends not in the profession. They'll interrupt you when you want to show them your scrapbook of notices, just when you are reading to them about what the dramatic critic of the East Saugerties Herald said about your work in repertoire as Phoebe, the maid in 'Lady Audley's Secret,' or saying to you, 'Aw, that Saugerties is the bum town to sell goods!'"

"The other night, just to show you, Mamma De Branscombe hears old Man Moneyton making some crack about two million dollars being lost through busted hose, and she sets up a scream that you can never trust the silk kind no matter how much you pay for 'em, because they get runs in them that give way when you least expect it, and in that

way once she lost twenty dollars of her own money she had just borrowed, and the party was mean enough to want her to pay it back!"

"Old Man Moneyton gave her such a look and said he was talking about Fire Department hose that busted at the Parker Building!"

At the mention of the word fire Louis Zinsheimer and Abie Woggebaum woke up, and the way they talked of total losses and reacquainting for an hour would make your head ache.

"That's why I like poor Dopey McKnight, he never talks shop. You'd never even know he played the piano to excess unless you ask him."

"Not that poor Dopey don't have his troubles, mind you, for he has. People expect him to pay what he owes, just as he says himself, just as if he was somebody else!"

"And his friend Boston Charley is in straits and the Musical Swede was pinched too, as a pal. Dopey McKnight says that the trouble is people take Boston Charley seriously. He shouldn't be taken seriously at all, neither should the Musical Swede, Dopey says."

"Just don't pay any attention to them when they take things," Dopey says, "and it will be all right." Dopey says he has introduced Boston Charley and the Musical Swede into the fast society and he has always told people that if they

stole anything he'd pay for it, and so he would if he had the money.

"Dopey says that people call them rumbums and makes cruel and vulgar cracks of that kind, while Boston Charley, in his active days, didn't have a peer as a porch climber. Anything well done is art, Dopey says; but, of course, he says that don't include beefsteaks. And where was there an artist in valuable that could give imitations of the human voice and birds and beasts of the forest and piping songsters of the woodland grove like the Musical Swede could on wood, string and brass?"

"And now what happens? Boston Charley, who has a great sense of humor, goes around to jewelry stores and, as he steps in the door he says, 'Look Who's Here!' And throws a handful of cayenne pepper in the salesman's eyes and walks off with the nearest tray of sparks."

"Just for that they pinch him the other day and prefer a charge of grand larceny. With him goes the Musical Swede, who is standing around outside just to see Boston Charley gets fair play and no two jumps on him, as the accomplice."

"Dopey McKnight's voice trembles with indignation as he tells how he goes to court himself and asks the judge to change the charge to petty larceny, because everybody knows what a slump there's been in diamonds, and they throw him out on his neck."

Dopey says he has known Boston Charley for years and years and years. And if he didn't as active as he used to be it ain't on account of his being a rummy. It's because while the rich was riding in their automobiles Boston Charley's had to go on the back ends of street cars in all sorts of weather lifting stick pins and pocket cluckers from careless parties.

"Dopey says Boston Charley always treated him right, and once, when they were travelling on the B. & O., Boston Charley found a pocketbook in a guy's pocket in the parlor car and gave twenty dollars to Dopey to lose his memory. That's how they first got acquainted. Dopey says he knew they'd be a holler when the guy missed his tanyard, and so he went forward to the dining car and tucked his twenty under the carpet when no one was looking, because, he says, he expected a search of the parlor."

"But the meek gets off at Martinsburg, W. Va., without missing his leather, and when Dopey goes to the dining car to dig up his treasure, he finds the dining car had been cut off at Brunswick half an hour before."

"After that, Dopey says, he made up his mind it wasn't no use to try to be honest and saving, and from that on he blows his coin as it comes."

"Maybe he's right, kid. Harry Trimmers, the astringent spendthrift, never loosens, but I don't see anybody throwing confetti on him, while everybody loves Dopey, only they don't show it."

## Thirst Appeasers of the Desert.

By Dr. D. T. MacDougall.

**T**HE Indian and the desert traveller often seek relief in the juices of plants when water fails. The fruits of some of the prickly pears are slightly juicy; the fronds of the same plant, or the great trunks of the saguaro contain much sap, but for the most part it is bitter and while it would save life in extremity, yet it is very unpleasant to use. The barrel cactus, or bisnaga (echinocactus), however, contains within its spiny cylinders a fair substitute for good water. To get at this juice one must be armed with a stout knife or an axe, with which to decapitate the plant, which is done by cutting away a section from the top. Next a green stake is obtained from some shrub or tree that is free from bitter substances, and with this or with the axe the white pith of the interior is pounded to a pulp and a cavity that would hold two gallons is formed. Squeezing the pulp between the hands into this cavity will give from three to six pints of a drinkable liquid that is far from unpleasant, and is generally a few degrees cooler than the air. Scouting Indians have long used the bisnaga to save carrying a heavy supply of water, and a drink may be obtained in this manner by a skilled operator in five or ten minutes.

## Some Facts About Melodrama.

By Jules Eckert Goodman.

**F**ACTS about melodrama are rather sensational. Take for example this one item: A stage manager during the past season, with his different attractions, has played to 322 weeks of business, an equivalent to eleven theatrical seasons, with gross receipts of nearly \$1,500,000. Some 500 people were engaged as members of his different companies and their salaries amounted to over \$500,000, an average of nearly \$10,000 per week. His printing bill alone was almost \$75,000. And this was but a single manager, though one of the biggest. Every week in New York City between 50,000 and 100,000 people attend melodrama performances. You can hardly laugh away these things. A form of entertainment which draws like this and upon which so much is expended is worthy of serious consideration.—The Bohemian.

## Smoking Car Compliments.

**A**T a dinner in Washington the Bishop of London told a story. As the cigars came on, about one of his predecessors, "When Dr. Creighton was Bishop of London," he said, "he rode on a train one day with a small, meek curate. Dr. Creighton, an ardent lover of tobacco, soon took out his cigar case and said: 'You don't mind my smoking, I suppose?' The meek, pale little curate bowed and answered humbly: 'Not if Your Lordship doesn't mind my being sick.'"